

IDPH Drought Response Task Force Report August 8, 2012

1. Local Health Departments report that low water tables are having the following impacts on shallow private water wells:
 - There is an overall trend of increased permits for new wells and deepening existing wells.
 - There has been a noticed increase of well servicing calls to lower pumps.
 - Numerous private well owners are hauling bulk water from alternate supplies. Several municipal water supplies have now stopped selling bulk water and others are restricting sales. This could become a significant public health issue if more municipal water supplies suspend bulk water sales.
2. Lee and Whiteside County report agricultural irrigation has been associated with drops in local aquifers resulting in localized instances of a few shallow private wells running dry.
3. IDPH Food Drugs and Dairies Division has determined the need to resume aflatoxin sampling for milk. The mycotoxins found in grain are more predominant during a drought season and many corn fields being harvested for silage. Dairy cows that eat feed containing 20 PPB or greater of aflatoxins may produce milk that exceeds the tolerance level for aflatoxins. The guideline for allowing milk into the supply is a level less than 0.5 parts per billion. The sampling and testing will begin in September and will continue through Spring 2013. The frequency of testing will be no less than bi-annually but most likely four times in the next six months. Aflatoxins are carcinogenic to animals and possibly humans, and thus shall be monitored closely.